



The River Review

SPOKANE, WASHINGTON ★ JULY 13-18, 2009

Presented by the Paralyzed Veterans of America and the Department of Veterans Affairs

Photo Courtesy of Spokane Regional CVB/Alan Bisson

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Wheelchair Games and the Paralympians

From around the globe they came, descending upon Beijing last summer to compete as the top contenders of their sport. Elite competitors, trained to a razor sharp edge of athletic prowess, proved their mettle on the courts, in the water and on the streets of China's capital city during the record-breaking 2008 Paralympic Games, Sept. 6-17, 2008.

The slogan for the Games, "One World, One Dream," epitomized the global nature of the competition.

According to the International Paralympic Committee (IPC), 3,951 athletes from 146 countries arrived in Beijing to compete in 472 medal events. Twenty sports which

of Baltimore, Md., and Erin Popovich of Silverbow, Mont., each earned six medals. U.S. Athletes participating in team sports also placed well at the gold medal level.

Four of the athletes who competed in Beijing last September were also regular participants in the National Veterans Wheelchair Games. They include Scot Severn, an Army Veteran from Caro, Mich.; Scott Winkler, an Army Veteran from Georgetown, Ga.; Angela Madsen a Marine Corps Veteran from Long Beach, Calif.; and Carlos Leon, a Marine Corps Veteran from Birmingham, Ala. Severn and Madsen are competing here at the Games in Spokane this week.

"The National Veterans Wheelchair Games bring out the athlete in every disabled Veteran," Severn said. "The competition is good for the body, mind and soul. The Games last a week, but the friendships last a lifetime."

As a last minute addition to the team, attending the Paralympic Games was the chance of a lifetime for Severn. "It was pretty amazing. It is hard for me to compare it to any other Games I have competed in. Entering the Bird's Nest (Olympic Stadium) for the opening ceremonies and seeing that many people was simply amazing." Severn made his Paralympic debut at Beijing in the men's discus and shot-put events.

"The National Veterans Wheelchair Games were the beginning of a career in adaptive sports that has spanned a decade and taken me all over the world," said Madsen. "I've looked forward to seeing all of my friends from previous Games."

In 2008, Madsen became the first woman with a disability to row across the Atlantic Ocean, rowing nearly 3,000 miles in 67 days.



Angela Madsen competes in the 2007 Games in Milwaukee.

Madsen is also on the U.S. Rowing Team and competed in the 2008 Paralympics in Beijing, China. She's a four-time World Championship gold medalist.

By the numbers, coordinating and running the 2008 Paralympic Games was a colossal undertaking. The IPC reported that over 30,000 people took part in the Games as representatives and volunteers. 5,600 members of the media were on hand providing coverage for 80 countries. The Paralympics also launched its first internet video portal when it initiated its own YouTube channel, ParalympicSportTV.

As the Games drew to a close after 12 days of athletic competition, the Paralympic athletes bid farewell to their fellow attendees with full knowledge that their next competition would only be a few short years away. The next Paralympic Winter Games will be held in Vancouver, Canada, March 12-21, 2010.

A number of other Wheelchair Games competitors have taken part in past Paralympic Games as well. Kevin Stone, Kater Cornwell, Jim Martinson, Russ Monroe, and James Torres are just a few. All of them help prove that getting their start in the National Veterans Wheelchair Games can lead to elite competition at the world class level.



Scot Severn competes in the 2008 Games in Omaha, Neb.

comprised the 2008 Paralympic Games: Archery, Athletics, Boccia, Cycling, Equestrian, Football 5-a-Side, Football 7-a-Side, Goalball, Judo, Powerlifting, Rowing, Sailing, Shooting, Swimming, Table Tennis, Volleyball (Sitting), Wheelchair Basketball, Wheelchair Fencing, Wheelchair Rugby and Wheelchair Tennis.

Several Team USA Paralympic athletes brought home multiple gold medals from the Games. USA swimmers Jessica Long



Your Story, Your Community: Hometown News at the Games

Several years ago, the Games' public affairs team created, and now maintains, the "Hometown News" program for the National Veterans Wheelchair Games. This program was designed to inform newspapers of local Veteran athletes participating in the Games.

Veterans requesting news coverage will have an individual news release written for them and placed on the Games Web site later in the week, to make the information available for their local media.

For those Veterans who have asked for a hometown news release, we hope to have them posted on the Web site by Tuesday or Wednesday. To view these releases, just visit the Games Web site at www.wheelchairgames.va.gov and click on the "Athlete Information" tab on the left side. In addition to the news release, a photo will also be included on the Web site. Photographers will be on-site all week taking action photos of as many athletes as possible and our goal is to have the very best photos posted on the Web site. A hard-copy of your personal release and one, color, 4" x 6" print of your best photo should be available for you to take home the last day of the Games.

Posting the news releases on the Web site makes them much more accessible to local media sources. The public affairs team will also be e-mailing hundreds of national media outlets all week to inform them that Veterans are here and competing. Unfortunately, coverage is never a guarantee, but every effort is made to make the information available to your local media.

If you are a Veteran that has requested media coverage, please visit the Games Web site to see your personal news release, photo and event results. The site is updated daily, so information is available to view during the Games or afterwards. Please help our team spread the word to the newspapers and other media sources in your hometown about the wonderful story behind the Wheelchair Games.

If you didn't request a news release on your hometown news form, but would now like one made, you must complete another form and turn it in to our public affairs team in the Games media center by noon today. The media center is located in Exhibit Hall A at the Convention Center.



Veteran Receives Motorcycle Club Grant to Attend Games



Chris Santistevan of Gillette, Wyo., competes in the 2008 Games.

In 2004, Chris Santistevan was driving too fast when he went off a bridge and flipped his car into a creek. The accident resulted in the loss of both legs above the knee, and his right arm above the elbow. In the last five years, he has had 55 surgeries and spent 22 months in the hospital.

Despite the many obstacles he has faced since that time, Santistevan, a Marine Corps Veteran, is always willing to help others. Now, he and his wife spend their time speaking to high school students and local business about the dangers of unsafe driving.

This is Santistevan's third consecutive year competing in the National Veterans Wheelchair Games, an event that has created a lot of opportunities for him. "The best part of the Games is getting to see old friends and making new ones," he said. "It is also nice being able to play sports on an even playing field where everyone is in the same position I am."

This year, though, he's had an easier time paying for his trip to the Games, having been chosen as the recipient of the Colorado 500 Motorcycle Club Grant for 2009. According to Janet Lohman, the club's vice president, the \$2000 grant is given to a deserving Veteran who was injured in a motorcycle accident, or was/is a member of a motorcycle club. It covers the recipient's expenses while participating in the Games. The applicant must display enthusiasm that is contagious to others, and also have a proven record of positive therapeutic performance in sports and the rehabilitation process. Santistevan is the second athlete to be awarded this special grant.

Santistevan, 34, who lives in Gillette, Wyo., had no problem meeting the criteria for the award. In addition to his volunteer speaking engagements, he helps raise scholarship money for the Vietnam Vets/Legacy Vets Motorcycle Club. The money goes to deserving service members to help pay for their education.

Thus far, Santistevan has fared well at the Games. He won gold medals in both 2007 and 2008, in air guns and motorized slalom. He also earned silver medals in 2007, in the powerchair relay and powerchair 200.

Though he enjoys the competition, the best part of the Games for Santistevan is just being there. "It's really nice seeing everyone," he said. "The camaraderie, being able to meet new people and seeing all the things that other people in wheelchairs can do is a great experience."

When he's not volunteering, Santistevan loves bow hunting. He's a member of Physically Challenged Bow hunters of America and loves introducing new people to the sport. Although he can no longer ride, he also enjoys spending time at the motorcycle club with fellow Veterans, and raising money to help others who need it.

For more information about this grant, check out next year's registration packet for the 2010 Games. The deadline for applying is April 15.

2009 Rosenberg Award Winner

The Rosenberg Award, a grant up to \$1,000, is awarded annually to a deserving first-time athlete to help offset expenses to attend the Games. The grant helps ease the decision to participate by removing at least some of the financial burden. The annual grant began in 2002 when Robin L. Higgins, a former VA under secretary for memorial affairs, decided to pay tribute to her grandfather who was a disabled World War I veteran.

Rosenberg Award

This year's winner is Teresa Cahill from Covington, Ky., who will be competing in javelin, table tennis, softball and bowling. Cahill said, "This has been a life changing experience to be involved in an event like this. I cannot give the program enough praise!" She receives her care at the VA Medical Center in Cincinnati, Ohio. According to Sandy Turvey, recreational specialist at the medical center, "Teresa is a very athletic person who has discovered she can enjoy a lot of the sports she used to enjoy...but now just from her wheelchair." Cahill is also actively involved in meetings, practices and fundraising for the local team.

If you are a coach, therapist or athlete who knows of a novice athlete who might need some assistance next year, consider nominating them for the Rosenberg Award. Athletes are eligible if they receive care at a VA facility and need financial assistance to participate in their first Games. They must exhibit contagious enthusiasm and have a proven record of therapeutic performance in both sports and their rehabilitation process.

For more information about the award, contact Tom Brown, VA's national director of the Wheelchair Games, at (210) 617-5159.

Thank our Volunteers!

To host an event like the National Veterans Wheelchair Games, it takes thousands of dedicated volunteers whose assignments run the gamut from distributing water to helping with meals, transportation, event set-up and all things in between. This year, you can help us recognize the efforts of the 3,000 Spokane volunteers through a new initiative to thank them. All participating athletes received special stickers in their registration packets that they give to any volunteer who they feel has done an outstanding job during the Games. When the week concludes, the volunteer with the most stickers will be eligible for a special award. Without our volunteers, this event just could not happen. Help us recognize all of our outstanding volunteers this week by participating in this new program.



Q ~ Everyone keeps telling us to drink water, not only here at the Games but all the time. Please explain the logical reasons for all that fluid! – Enterprising Earthling

A ~ Dear Earthling: Spock, in Star Trek's original series, called humans a carbon-based life form. What he meant to say is that humans are a chemically derived life form that is 70 percent water. Dr. McCoy could have noted that the brain is 85 percent water, blood (the red kind) is 90 percent water and the human liver, one of our most vital organs, is 96 percent water! So, if we dehydrate ourselves, we become a dried-out carbon based prune, 30 percent in size of what you are now. Therefore, Spock would say it's a logical assumption that the quantity of the water we drink has a very significant effect on our overall health.

Dehydration has serious consequences to your health as well as overall athletic performance. Some causes of dehydration are: not drinking, sweating, diarrhea, vomiting and having diabetes. If dehydrated, you will notice thirst along with decreased urine output. The urine will also become concentrated and more yellow in color. As dehydration increases, more symptoms can become apparent such as dry mouth, your eyes not making tears, not sweating, having muscle cramps, nausea, vomiting and lightheadedness. With severe dehydration, confusion and weakness will occur as the brain and other body organs receive less blood. Finally, coma and organ failure can occur if dehydration remains untreated.

In a normal day, a person has to drink a significant amount of water to replace routine water loss. During the Wheelchair Games, with all the excitement and the heat of summer while competing, it becomes essential that we take in as much fluids as possible.

The first step is train yourself to drink more water, and there are many good ways to do that. First, use a bigger glass. Instead of the old rule of eight 8-ounce glasses daily, drink eight 12-ounce glasses. Secondly, if you want to "detox" or flush out the toxins that make their way in, drink more water than that minimum level like 10-12 glasses a day at a minimum. Store your water in glass – it looks better, tastes better, is better for you and you'll naturally drink more. To sum up, the more we drink, the more we allow our bodies to purify themselves.

Lastly, please keep in mind that bottled waters are no better than tap water. In fact, they can be worse because tossed landfills. Mr. Spock and Dr. McCoy would appreciate that you think of the future of the planet when you decide.

Drink well and prosper!

Dr. Dan (Ghostwriter: Dr. Kenneth Lee)



"Dr. Daniel Scott, Medical Director of the Wheelchair Games, is a staff physician at the VA Eastern Colorado Health Care System in Denver. Here's what he and his team have to say about today's topic."







Welcome to Spokane! As you arrived downtown on Sunday or if you're out and about Spokane this week, you might notice one of eight large colorful billboards gracing area highways that publicize this week's event. Located on major thoroughfares throughout the city, the advertising is just one more way of welcoming you to Spokane. According to Matthew Allen, local Public Affairs Coordinator who came up with the idea, "It's awesome that [the competitors] will see how excited the city is before they even see it. These athletes are going to feel like bona fide rock stars when they're rolling around Spokane!" Have fun *Roll'n on the River*, everyone!



Tuesday, July 14



Tuesday's Meal Hours SCC, Ballroom 100 A/B/C	
Breakfast	6 - 8 a.m.
Lunch	10:30 a.m. - 1:30 p.m.
Dinner	4:30 - 6:30 p.m.

Breakfast

Scrambled eggs, hash brown potatoes, bacon, sausage, grilled ham, biscuits & gravy, oatmeal, cold cereal, fresh fruit, muffins, Danish, fresh juice, coffee, hot tea and milk

Today's Option:

Cheese omelet (with sour cream and salsa on the side)

Lunch

Fresh salad bar (lettuce, cherry tomatoes, cheddar cheese, croutons, sunflower seeds, beets, assorted beans), potato salad, fresh vegetables, dinner rolls assorted desserts, coffee, iced tea with lemons and milk

Today's Option:

Meatloaf or hot turkey sandwich, mashed potatoes and gravy

Dinner

Fresh salad bar (lettuce, cherry tomatoes, cheddar cheese, croutons, sunflower seeds, beets, assorted beans), potato salad, fresh vegetables, dinner rolls, assorted desserts, coffee, iced tea with lemons and milk

Today's Option:

Grilled flat iron steak, baked salmon and Yukon Gold potatoes

Meals for the Games will start at breakfast today and end Saturday at lunch.

Athletes and others receiving complimentary meals will use a debit card issued by the Spokane Convention Center (SCC). The card will be loaded daily with a balance of \$46 for your meals for that day (except on Wednesday (\$26), Friday (\$30) and Saturday (\$26) due to the Games schedule.) Any amount not used will be zeroed out at the end of the day. You may use your debit card at the concession stands or in the Games cafeteria located in SCC, Ballroom 100 A/B/C. Guests and family members may purchase food items in the cafeteria or at the concession stands.

SCC concession stands are located in the back of Group Health Exhibit A and in Riverside Hall D. Food available includes: muffins, Danish, bagels, cookies, soft drinks, juice, coffee, yogurt, milk, pretzels, nachos, french fries, bratwurst, German sausage, hamburgers, grilled chicken breasts, deli sandwiches, chef salad and kettle chips.

Please watch *The River Review* daily for more information on the daily menu and the meal exceptions on Wednesday, Friday and Saturday.

Durable Medical Equipment (DME)

DME is only available on an on-call basis. If you need a device, please call (509) 342-1133 to see if one is available. When you depart on Sunday, leave any DME you borrowed in your hotel room, where it will be picked up after check-out.



Don't leave the Games without your memorabilia items! Visit Convention Center, Room 103 for fantastic hats, towels, sports bags, mugs, water bottles, shirts and more.

Kick-Off a Huge Success

The very un-summerlike weather did not deter the Games from officially starting. Department of Veterans Affairs Secretary Eric Shinseki helped tip-off a demonstration basketball match and the Games were under way! A crowd of approximately 300 were entertained by remarks from the Secretary, an Air Force band and the prowess of the basketball players.

"These Games are not only great for the athletes, they're even better for us as spectators," Shinseki said. Shinseki also acknowledged athletes who have traveled internationally from Great Britain and Korea. After the demonstration, the athletes challenged some of the VIPs in attendance to join the game. Many air balls were thrown by the guests but fun was had by all.

(See photos from the Kick-off on page 4.)

Medical suites are located at the **Doubletree Hotel Room 1102 and Davenport Towers Room 1655**. They open Monday, July 13 at 7 a.m. and will close Saturday, July 18 at 10:30 p.m. Medical assistance will be available at all times (with the exception of the Opening Ceremonies) for the duration of the Games.

For athletes staying at the Courtyard by Marriott, Fairfield Inn, Oxford Suites or Travel Lodge, medical assistance will be available nightly from 11:30 p.m. to 7:30 a.m. If an athlete has a medical emergency during this time, call the hotel operator and they will communicate with the physician on-call. At other times Veterans should go to the medical suites located at the Doubletree, Davenport Towers or at the Spokane Convention Center (SCC).

The **medical suite at the SCC** opens daily at 7 a.m. until the last event at the SCC has ended each day. In the case of a life-threatening emergency, please have the hotel operator call 911.

Only registered athletes or registered volunteers on duty may be treated by Games' medical staff. A list of local emergency clinics and hospitals will be available for family members who need medical assistance.

Awards Presentation Schedule

Medals will be awarded in two ways:

1. For Team events with a clear first, second and third place, medals will be awarded at the venue immediately after the competition.

Awards will be presented immediately upon completion for the following events: Super G, Power Soccer, Basketball, Quad Rugby and Softball.

2. For events that require the results to be tabulated, medal presentations will be delayed. Presentations will be in the Convention Center, Riverside D, on the following dates and times. Once results are confirmed, they will be posted on the TV monitors located in the Convention Center.

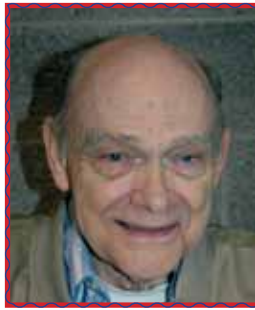


Awards Schedule

Wednesday, July 15	9:30 a.m. - 8 p.m.
Thursday, July 16	9:30 a.m. - 8:30 p.m.
Friday, July 17	9:30 a.m. - 10 p.m.
Saturday, July 18	11 a.m. - 5 p.m.

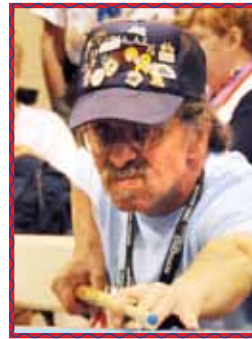
Someone You Should Know...

The National Veterans Wheelchair Games bring together wheelchair athletes from all over the nation (and beyond), representing all branches of the military service. Take the time to meet as many as you can. Here is a little information about four of your fellow competitors at this week's Games. Look them up this week, since they all are "Someone You Should Know." Today's column is focused on Veterans participating from near and far – as near as Spokane and as far as Great Britain. Read on!



This week, Spokane local Russell Braun is making his eighth appearance at the Wheelchair Games. Braun, 70, is an Air Force Veteran who enjoys encouraging others to come to the Games as much as he enjoys participating himself. "The Games give the newly injured

Veterans the knowledge that they can do more than sit around the house," he said. "It gives them self confidence and incentive, and really opens up their lives a lot more." Although he is not claiming a home court advantage, he has that sense of comfort and pride that could just give him an edge.



Another area local, Bud Bemis from Loon Lake, is also competing this week, marking his fourth consecutive Games. He also had the distinct honor of serving as one of the two torch bearers that during last evening's Opening Ceremonies.

Bemis, a 60-year-old Navy Veteran, exudes enthusiasm about the Games and encourages fellow Veterans to participate and experience all the benefits the event provides. "Coming to the Wheelchair Games is like seeing 600 smiles on wheels," he said. He expects to experience a lot of hometown pride at this week's competitions.



Margaret Mitchell hopes that 13 is her lucky number since she is participating in her 13th consecutive Games this week. Mitchell, 58, from Northern Ireland, is a combat-wounded Veteran of the British Military. She joined the British Ex-Service

Wheelchair Sports Association (BEWSA), the organization that introduced her to the Games, and she has attended every year since. She believes that the Games are very beneficial for all Veterans. "I encourage newcomers to mix in with the Veterans so they can listen and learn from those who have participated before. The most important thing of all is to enjoy the experience," she said.



Getting other Veterans to experience the benefits of the Wheelchair Games is what it's all about for Jo-Ann Rodriguez, an Army Veteran. Rodriguez, 42, who lives in Boa Taja, P.R., discovered the Games from her recreational therapist and coach, Victor Ramirez.

"I thank God for putting him into my life," she said. "The Wheelchair Games are the best thing that could happen to any injured Veteran. She is competing this week in her eighth Games and trains months before to prepare herself for the competition. "Limitation is not in my vocabulary," Rodriguez said. "It's will power that makes you push the limit."

Wheelchair Repair

The Wheelchair Repair Shop is located at the Doubletree Hotel Suite B and is open from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. through Saturday, July 18. Hours will be extended as necessary. Service for minor repairs will be available at the Spokane Convention Center and all off-site venues from 8 a.m., through the end of the final event. Wheelchair repair will also be present at airport arrival and departure times. If you need emergency wheelchair repair after hours, please call 993-6242.

Team Assignments

All team assignments have been made; team lists for quad rugby, basketball, power soccer and softball are available in the meals area, the hospitality desk and the media center at the Spokane Convention Center. Once you know which team you have been assigned to, please pick up your team roster as soon as possible and find out when and where you'll be playing. Quad rugby and basketball begin this afternoon at the Spokane Convention Center, Riverside A; power soccer begins tomorrow. Please check for start times when you pick up your team rosters. Let's start Rockin' (and Roll'n) on the River!



Weather
Partly Cloudy Skies
High 81°
Low 54°

HP is once again sponsoring an iCafé (internet café) at the Games. Located outside the Ballroom in the Spokane Convention Center (SCC). It features computer stations and plug-in ports for personal laptops. It is open daily from 6 a.m. to 9 p.m. *Thank you, HP!*

Check this out...Spokane has a WiFi “hot zone” in a 100+ square block in the downtown district near the SCC.

Share your Memories from Games

HP has posted a Web site on Snapfish for photos from the Games. Go to <http://www.snapfish.com/nationalwheelchair-games> to view, upload or download photos for free. New users who sign up get 50 free 4" x 6" prints. Additional prints are available for 9¢ each.

If you are missing an item, please check in with our Lost and Found in the Convention Center, Room 102 A/B. Hours will be from 8 a.m. thru 10 p.m. daily throughout the Games.

8 a.m.	7:30 - 8:30 a.m. Late Registration <i>Spokane Convention Center (SCC), Room 102D</i>	8 a.m. - Table Tennis Tennis IV, V, Standing <i>SCC, Riverside D</i> - Nine-ball II, III <i>SCC, Riverside B1</i> - Bowling I A,B,C [handleball, stick] <i>Lilac Lanes, Spokane</i>
9	10 a.m. - Bowling Ramp [by assigned times] <i>North Bowl, Spokane</i>	
10		
11		
12 Noon		
1	1 p.m. - Table Tennis II, III <i>SCC, Riverside D</i> - Air Guns <i>SCC, Riverside B2</i> - NineBall IV, V <i>SCC, Riverside B1</i> - Bowling Ramp [by assigned times] <i>Lilac Lanes, Spokane</i> - Bowling Ramp [by assigned times] <i>North Bowl, Spokane</i>	2 - 5 p.m. - Weightlifting Weigh-In <i>SCC, Room 111B</i>
2		
3		
4		
5		
6		
7	7 p.m. - Basketball Games 1, 2 <i>SCC, Riverside A</i> - Air Guns <i>SCC, Riverside B2</i>	6:30 p.m. - Slalom I A, B, C <i>SCC, Riverside C</i>
8		
9		
10		
11 p.m.		8:30 p.m. - Basketball Games 3, 4 <i>SCC, Riverside A</i>

www.wheelchairgames.va.gov

Daily editions of the *River Review* are posted on the National Veterans Wheelchair Games Web site. Tell your friends and family back home to log on to see all that is happening as you are *Roll'n on the River* this week.

Show Your Spirit with a Nomination!

The annual **Spirit of the Games** award has been received every year since 1987 by an athlete who clearly demonstrates not only athletic competence, but also sportsmanship and strength of character. If you know or have seen an athlete that possesses these qualities, please nominate them for the 2009 Spirit of the Games award. The process is simple, just fill out a nomination form, located in the dining area as well as the main hospitality desk, and put them in the available ballot boxes by 10 a.m. on Friday, July 17. Help us recognize our outstanding athletes by submitting a nomination today!

There are two pick-up/drop-off sites at the Spokane Convention Center (SCC): the Hub (the transportation hub located at the intersection of W. Spokane Falls Blvd. and N. Spokane Falls Ct.) and the back entrance. Hotel pick-up sites are at the main lobby entrances. *All pick-up/drop-off sites have signage placed by the Spokane Transit Authority (STA).*

Tuesday Schedule:	
Departures sites	Time
Hotels to SCC Hub and back entrance, and return to Hotels	5 a.m. and every 10 minutes until 10:30 p.m.
The Hub to Lilac Lanes Bowling	6:15 until 7:30 a.m.
The Hub to North Bowl Bowling	8 until 9:30 a.m.
The Hub to Lilac Lanes and North Bowl Bowling	10 a.m. until 12:30 p.m.
Lilac Lanes and North Bowl Bowling to Hub	2:30 until 4 p.m.

Cartoon of the Day



"And for you, Dorothy, a portable GPS system to help you find your way back to Kansas."